



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601

PAT QUINN
GOVERNOR

August 13, 2009

Administrator
Rural Utilities Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250-1500

Assistant Secretary
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Letter of Support for the Illinois Century Network Fiber Migration Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

I believe that it is in the best interest of the State to migrate the Illinois Century Network (ICN) from its current carrier-owned, leased-line system to the proposed State-owned fiber network. The proposed ICN BIG (Bringing Illinois Gigaspeeds) promises lower prices, faster speeds, and comprehensive, equitable access to broadband service for every community in our State.

Under the current carrier-owned, leased-line system, entities not specified as part of the ICN are precluded from connecting to the system. A State-owned wholesale fiber network provides all "last mile" retail Internet Service Providers with equal access to the network in order to supply broadband service to regions that lack connectivity. As a true Middle Mile network, ICN BIG will provide service access points not only in densely populated areas, but also in rural areas traditionally overlooked when connecting the major cities. Importantly, the proposed network will provide up to 16 times the current bandwidth at the same or lower operating costs.

Investing in the construction of a State-owned fiber network will create jobs in the short term and benefit our citizens for decades to come. Without federal funding, the State will be unable to meet the demands of emerging services in advanced telemedicine and distance learning. The total cost for ICN BIG is \$130 million. The State of Illinois has pledged \$26 million in capital costs for this effort, and we request \$104 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This investment will produce the twin benefits of job creation and economic stimulation.

I support the ICN BIG (Bringing Illinois Gigaspeeds) project. Please accept this letter as the certification required under RIN 0572-ZA01 and 0660-ZA28.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn".

Pat Quinn
Governor